

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

GUIDELINES FOR MEMBER CONDUCT

Thank you for your interest in volunteering as a member of a board, commission or committee (“board”) for the City of Milwaukie. Serving on a board provides a way for residents who have special experience or interests to participate in the City’s decision-making process by advising the City Council on numerous issues.

CARRYING OUT THE BOARD DUTIES

Now that you have been appointed to one of the boards, we would like to make you aware of the following guidelines, which you may find useful during your tenure. They are a supplement to the existing statutes governing conduct, which includes the ethics law of the State of Oregon.

It is important to remember as a representative of the City you are a public official and are therefore held to a higher standard by Council, staff, peers and the citizens of Milwaukie while performing your board responsibilities. You may be faced with difficult decisions and situations. Civility and diplomacy are not only important but expected in your role as a City board member.

- All meetings of boards, commissions or committees are public meetings, unless declared to be an executive session, in accordance with the State of Oregon public meeting laws.
- You should always review materials provided in advance of the meeting so you are prepared to give your full attention to the matters at hand.
- You should always do your part to maintain the organization’s transparency. Take steps to avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest, declaring publicly if a potential or actual conflict of interest arises, and take appropriate steps.
- You should treat other board members, City Council, staff and the public with patience, courtesy and civility, even when there is disagreement on what is best for the community.
- Always be aware of the public nature of written notes, calendars, voicemail messages, and e-mail. All written or recorded materials including notes, voicemail, text messages, and e-mail created as part of one’s official capacity will be treated as potentially “public” communication.
- Recognize that even private conversations can have a public presence. As board members you are often the focus of the public’s attention. Even casual conversation about city business, other public officials, the public or staff may draw the attention of the public and be repeated.
- Board members often are asked to explain a board action or to give their opinion about an issue as they meet and talk with citizens. It is appropriate to give a brief overview of a board action or project status, however, be careful to not promise that a City board or staff member will take any specific action.

Attendance of Meetings

- Members are expected to attend all board meetings, however, the community understands that conflicts may prevent a member from attending up to 25% of the meetings a year. Year refers to a member’s board term. For instance, some terms start on April 1 while others begin July 1.

Individual Conduct of Board Members

The individual attitudes, words, and actions of board members in public and in private should demonstrate, support, and reflect the qualities and characteristics of Milwaukie. Milwaukie suggests these guidelines:

- Be honest with fellow board members, the public and others.
- Credit others’ contributions to moving our community’s interests forward.
- Strive to make independent, objective, fair and impartial judgments.
- Adhere to the State ethics rules and reject gifts, services or other special considerations that are

only offered because of your service as a public official. This includes excusing yourself from participating in decisions when a member of your immediate family's or household's financial interests or your own may be affected by the board's action.

- Conduct yourself in a courteous and respectful manner at all times.

Board Conduct with the Media and Social Media

Be mindful if speaking with the press that anything said in a City meeting may end up in print. In discussions about City business or issues with the press or through social media, you should be careful to not represent your personal opinion as if it is the City's position on an issue, or represents that of your board or commission.

Milwaukie Municipal Code and Board By Laws

City boards, commissions and committees are established by the City Council as authorized in the Milwaukie Municipal Code Chapter 2.10. Chapters 2.10 to 2.24 reference the appointment and removal process for members and also explain the purpose and membership of each board, commission or committee. Additionally, each board also has its own set of bylaws for members to follow.